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CITY OF ROCHESTER



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

of the

PORT OF ROCHESTER

1955



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PORT OF ROCHESTER

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PORT MEDICAL OFFICER FOR 1955

I. Staff.

TABLE A.

Name of Officer	Nature of Appointment	Date of Appointment	Qualifications	Any other Appointments held
J.O. Murray	Port Medical Officer	11.6.1934	M.D., Ch.B., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health - City of Rochester and Borough of Chatham.
R.G. Brennen	Deputy Port Medical Officer	17.3.1952	M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H.	Deputy Medical Officer of Health City of Rochester and Borough of Chatham. Assist. County M.O.
C.H.N. Evans	Port Sanitary Inspector	1.7.1934	C.S.I.E.J.B., C.M.I., A.I.N.A.	-

Medical Officer of Health, 1, The Esplanade, Rochester. Tel. Chatham 3258.

II. Amount of Shipping Entering the District During the Year.

TABLE B.

Ships from	Number	Tonnage	Number Inspected		Number of ships reported as having, or having had during the voyage, infectious disease on board
			By the Medical Officer of Health	By the Sanitary Inspector	
Foreign Ports	362	261,333	6	310	1 (T.B. landed in Oporto)
Coastwise	617	294,347	2	546	None
Total	979	555,680	8	856*	None

*Plus 220 Rivercraft.

III. Character of Shipping and Trade during the Year.

TABLE C.

(a) PASSENGER TRAFFIC.

Number of Passengers INWARDS) Only passenger traffic in Port is day trips
Number of Passengers OUTWARDS) during Summer to adjacent seaside resorts.

(b) CARGO TRAFFIC.

Principal IMPORTS. Wood pulp, timber, china clay, coal, crude oil, flour, wheat, fertilizers, animal feeding stuffs.

Principal EXPORTS. Cement, plasterboard, bitumen, creosote, diesel and gas oil.

(c) PRINCIPAL PORTS FROM WHICH SHIPS ARRIVE.

Holmsund, Valvi, Kasko, Kotka, Kragero, Avendal, Oslo, Faeker, Hammelvik, Many-
luoto, Gothenburg, Antwerp, Rotterdam, Simdsvald, Quebec, Clarke City, Las Pedros,
Indian Bay.

IV. Inland Barge Traffic.

Not applicable to this Port.

V. Water Supply.

1. (a) FOR THE PORT.

There are two sources. The South side of the River is supplied by the
Chatham and District Water Works; the North Side by the Strood Water Works.

(b) FOR SHIPPING.

The Supply is from the same sources.

2. REPORTS OF TESTS FOR CONTAMINATION.

24 samples of the Chatham and District Water Works supply, and 28 samples of
the Strood Water Works supply were taken for bacteriological examination. In ad-
dition 4 samples of the Strood Water Works supply were taken for chemical analysis.

The results proved them to be good waters.

3. PRECAUTIONS AGAINST CONTAMINATION OF HYDRANTS AND HOSEPIPES.

Hydrants from which ships are supplied are inspected from time to time.
Those in use are in covered, self-drained pits and the hydrants are capped.
Persons responsible for watering ships are warned against contaminating hose-
pipes by allowing them to come in contact with river water. It is the usual
practice to supply boiler water before filling drinking water tanks in order
to ensure hoses being well flushed.

Samples from ships' tanks are taken for bacteriological examination; 6
were taken during 1955, and all results were satisfactory.

4. NUMBER AND SANITARY CONDITION OF WATER BOATS, AND POWERS OF CONTROL BY THE
AUTHORITY.

There is one water boat operating on the River and this boat, which was
fitted out on the lines suggested by the Port Health Department, carries the
water in tanks capable of being lifted out of the boat.

The owners, by arrangement, notify the Port Health Department when opening
up and cement washing the tanks so that they may be inspected before being
closed down again.

VI. Public Health (Ships) Regulations, 1952.

1. LIST OF INFECTED AREAS.

Before coming into the district of the Port of Rochester vessels must first
enter at Sheerness, which is within the area of the Port of London Authority.
They, therefore, enter on a Port of London Declaration of Health which specifies
the following countries as being "listed" for the purpose of the declaration:-

Ports in Asia, including Japan,
East Indies and Ceylon,
Africa, including Madagascar,
The Canary Islands and
Cape Verde Islands,
Turkey, Black Sea, Azores,
South America, Central America,
Gulf of Mexico, West Indies.

Temporary additions to this list, owing to outbreaks in countries where "Convention" diseases are not endemic, are made known to the local Customs.

Vessels proceeding to Rochester, where full pratique has not been given at Sheerness, are allowed up on partial pratique and the Rochester Port Medical Officer is notified. The vessel is met on arrival by the Medical Officer, or his representative, and the vessel dealt with as circumstances require.

2. RADIO MESSAGES.

There is no arrangement for radio messages direct to Rochester. Such message would be directed to the Port of London Health Authority and would be passed on as requisite.

3. NOTIFICATIONS OTHERWISE THAN BY RADIO.

Where necessary, telephone messages are received from the Sheerness Boarding Station.

4. MOORING STATIONS.

The quarantine station is at Sheerness: other moorings are at Kethole Reach. The larger foreign trade ships discharge from six berths at buoys in the stream and can be isolated at these buoys if necessary. There are a number of berths, for smaller ships, in the stream.

5. ARRANGEMENTS FOR:-

(a) Hospital accommodation for infectious diseases (other than smallpox).

Disease	Hospital
Typhus Fever	St. Ann's General Hospital, St. Ann's Road, Tottenham, N.15. Tel. Stamford Hill 1144.
Cholera) Yellow Fever) Plague)	Any local Infectious Disease Hospital (or E.M.S. Bed Service. Tel. Monarch 3000).
Others	Any local Infectious Disease Hospital.

(b) Surveillance and follow up of contacts.

- (i) On Ships - by the Port Sanitary Inspector and
- (ii) On shore - by the Public Health Department staff.

(c) Cleansing and disinfection of

- (i) Ships - by the Port Staff;
- (ii) Persons - by Rochester Health Department;
- (iii) Clothing, etc. - by arrangement with the Chatham Health Department for steam disinfection.

VII. Smallpox.

1. Hospital to which smallpox cases are sent:-

Long Reach Hospital, Dartford. Tel. Dartford 3231.

2. Transport of smallpox cases to hospital.

This is provided by the London County Council Ambulance Service. Tel. Waterloo 3311.

Application is made by telephone and written confirmation sent to the County Medical Officer, County Hall, London.

3. Consultants Available.

Dr. J.P. Marsden)
Dr. W.J. Coughlan) River Hospitals, Joyce Green, Dartford. Tel. Dartford 3231.
Dr. M. Mitman)

4. Laboratory Diagnosis Facilities.

Specimens of scabs, etc., may be sent to the Public Health Laboratory Service, Colindale Avenue, Colindale, London, N.W.9 for diagnosis.

VIII. Venereal Disease.

Sessions are held at the Special Clinic, 36 New Road, Rochester, on Monday from 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. and on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and on other days by appointment. This information is made known to seamen by means of notices, in English, Dutch, Norwegian and German, posted on the Pier which is principally used by seamen landing from ships.

Seamen, in general, are by now well aware of the international facilities for the treatment of venereal disease.

In-patient treatment is available at the Seamen's Hospital, Greenwich, S.E.10.

IX. Case of Notifiable and other Infectious Diseases on Ships.

TABLE D.

Category	Disease	Number of cases during the year		Number of ships concerned
		Passengers	Crew	
Cases landed from ships from foreign ports	—	—	—	—
Cases which have occurred on ships from foreign ports but have been disposed of before arrival	T B.	—	1	1
Cases landed from other ships	—	—	—	—

X. Observations on the occurrence of malaria in ships.

The bulk of the shipping is from Scandinavian and North American Ports and malaria is not generally met with.

At one time Ground Nuts were imported from West Africa and some years ago malaria was, at times, found on those vessels. Since the cessation of this particular trade, in 1948, malaria has been rarely met with in the Port of Rochester and there have been no cases during the year.

XI. Measures taken against ships infected with or suspected for plague.

No infected or suspected vessels have arrived during the year.

XII. Measures against rodents in ships from foreign ports.

(1) PROCEDURE FOR INSPECTION OF SHIPS FOR RATS.

As a routine Deratization or Deratization Exemption Certificates are examined. Further course of action is determined as a result of such inspection. When inspecting crews' quarters, etc., a general enquiry is usually enough to discover the presence of rats on board some seamen complain very readily if they know of rats on board the ship.

Cargo workers are a good source of information. The trade in which the vessel has been engaged since her last Deratization, or Deratization Exemption Certificate was issued is an important factor in determining what further inspection should be carried out. Cargoes of wood pulp and pulp wood have little attraction for rats and vessels engaged constantly in this trade are not often infested; if rats are found they are generally confined to a peak or store room and are not distributed throughout the ship.

On the other hand a ship that has been employed for some time in carrying grain, or has carried out a long trip with such a cargo, merits further investigation particularly if her rat certificate is some months old. Such cargoes, at present, do not arrive in this Port but occasionally large vessels, which have carried such cargoes, arrive empty to load cement.

(2) BACTERIOLOGICAL OR PATHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF RODENTS.

There is no rodent operator permanently on Port work but, in cases when it is deemed necessary, the shore rodent operator is employed in order to obtain specimens of rats for bacteriological examination.

(3) DERATIZATION OF SHIPS.

For the issue of International Deratting Certificates an arrangement exists under Article 4 of the Regulations whereby the local Port Health Inspector carries out the inspection and forwards the report to the London Port Health Authority for issue of the certificate. If it should be necessary to derat a ship by fumigation, the firm employed would be that approved by the London Authority. In other cases of deratting poisons, traps, sulphur and varnish boards are the methods in use.

Deratting Exemption Certificates are issued by the Port of Rochester.

When inspecting a vessel for the issue of an International Sanitary Convention Certificate the inspection is carried out as required by the regulations governing the issue of such a certificate. The whole vessel from peaks, holds and engine room to chart and wireless rooms is inspected and report is made on harbourage, specifying the particular harbourage found in each compartment.

(4) There are no vessels, other than naval vessels, built in this Port and measures concerning rat-proofing are confined to dealing with existing rat-proofing which has suffered damage on board vessels in service, and inspecting rat-proofing on the smaller vessels undergoing repair and refit in local repair yards.

A proportion of the rats caught in the vicinity of the river is sent, as a routine, for bacteriological examination.

During the year 3 black rats were submitted for bacteriological examination for plague - no B. Pestis was found.

TABLE E.

RODENTS DESTROYED DURING THE YEAR IN SHIPS FROM FOREIGN PORTS.

Category	Number
Black rats	Nil
Brown rats	"
Species not known	"
Sent for examination	"
Infected with Plague	"

TABLE F.

DERATting CERTIFICATES AND DERATting EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES ISSUED DURING THE YEAR FOR SHIPS FROM FOREIGN PORTS.

No. of Deratting Certificates issued				No. of Deratting Exemption Certificates Issued	Total Certificates Issued	
After Fumigation with		After Trapping	After Poisoning			Total
HCN	Other fumigant (state method)					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	19	19

8 Deratting Certificates were also issued to British coastwise vessels making occasional trips to Continental Ports.

9 Rodent Control Certificates were issued.

XIII. Inspection of Ships for Nuisances.

TABLE G.
INSPECTIONS AND NOTICES.

Nature and number of Inspections	Notices served		Result of Notices
	Statutory Notices	Other Notices	
British Vessels 562	—	64	60 complied
Foreign Vessels 294	—	21	20 complied
River craft 220	—	3	3 complied

XIV. Public Health (Shellfish) Regulations 1934 and 1948.

Periwinkles only are taken from the River Medway. Collection of mussels, cockles and oysters is controlled by the Medway Shellfish Regulations, 1936, which require them to be relaid in approved waters or passed through a cleansing plant.

Mussels are not gathered owing to the expense involved in cleansing or relaying.

No cockles exist in numbers sufficient to be a commercial proposition.

Oysters are relaid at Brightlingsea or sent to the Brightlingsea Cleaning Plant for sterilization.

Sources of local supply of oysters and mussels are Whitstable and Billingsgate Market. No shellfish are imported from Overseas or British Ports.

XV. Medical Inspection of Aliens.

Rochester is not an approved Port for the landing of aliens.

XVI. Miscellaneous.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE BURIAL ON SHORE OF PERSONS WHO HAVE DIED ON BOARD SHIP FROM AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Any necessary precautionary measures are taken by the Port Medical Officer after which, burial would take place at one of the shore cemeteries or, if considered desirable, at the crematorium, Charing. Arrangements for the actual burial would, in the majority of cases, be made by the Shipping Agents. Under very exceptional circumstances burial would be arranged by the local Authority under the provisions of the National Assistance Act, 1948, Section 50.

RIVER SAMPLES.

6 samples of river water were submitted for bacteriological examination which showed evidence of recent faecal contamination but no pathogenic organisms were cultivated.

CASES OF SICKNESS.

1 Sprained wrist	1 broken leg
1 Heart attack	1 kidney trouble
1 dermatitis	1 dislocated shoulder
2 sore throat	1 stomach ulcer
1 fractured ribs	

FOOD INSPECTION.

Cargoes of wheat, potatoes, flour, tinned milk and cheese, totalling 67 were examined and all were in good condition.

MOSQUITOES.

Anti-mosquito measures have continued to be carried out on the local marshes under the direction of the Port Health Inspector. Numerous pools and collections of water have been treated where necessary and practicable. The spraying with D.D.T. has reduced the mosquito nuisance to negligible proportions.

HOUSEBOATS.

1 Houseboat disinfected following a case of Scarlet Fever.

PARROTS (PROHIBITION OF IMPORT) REGULATION, 1930.

Visits were made to two ships which had parrots aboard, and undertakings were obtained from the owners that the birds would not be taken ashore.



